

Michigan Water Resources Conservation Advisory Council

June 5, 2009, Meeting Summary

The Friday June 5, 2009, WRCAC Meeting was held in the Annex of the Drummond Island Resort and Conference Center at 33494 S Maxton Road in Drummond Island, Michigan from 9:00 to 3:00.

Council members in attendance were Jon Allan, Dr. Bryan Burroughs, James Clift, Jon Coleman, Michael Gregg, Craig Hoffman, Mark Lemons, Frank Ruswick, Dr. Paul Seelbach, Richard Slevatz, and Bob Walther.

Absent members were, Sumedh Bahl, Frank Ettawageshik, Dr. Jo Latimore, Peter Manning, Timothy Neumann, Michael Newman, Scott Piggott, Dr. Pat Soranno, Samuel Wendling and Paul Zuger.

Guests present were Mark Beyer, Gary Boersen, Jim Cleland, Pat Fouchey, Fred Goldberg, and Dave Hamilton and Grenetta Thomassey.

Welcome – Housekeeping items – Review agenda and goals for the day

At 9:00 Dr. Paul Seelbach welcomed everyone to the meeting. Those in attendance introduced themselves. Craig Hoffman welcomed everyone to the Drummond Island Resort & Conference Center.

Approval of the Draft Summary of May 1 WRCAC Meeting.doc was accepted as written to be placed on the www.michigan.gov/wrcac webpage.

Dr. Paul Seelbach suggested the subcommittee chairs identify the issues that need to be brought out for consensus. James Clift said are we trying to crank something out in August that could be much better if extended. Frank Ruswick said today it is important that subcommittees identify what they are struggling with. James Clift said if we want an extension, he would bring it up at the update meeting that Senator Patricia L. Birkholz has scheduled for Thursday (June 11, 2009) in the morning at 9:00. Senator Patricia L. Birkholz is looking for a verbal interim report.

Subcommittees Highlighting Report Content / Getting Council Input on Content

Tool Recommendations

Dr. Paul Seelbach

At 9:14 Dr. Paul Seelbach spoke on behalf of the Tool Recommendations Subcommittee. Subcommittee Chair Dr. Paul Seelbach said the subcommittee had a meeting last week. There were 13 attendees. In the report the first big heading will be: Refinement of the Tool. The second big heading in the report will be Guiding the Science Language. Dr. Paul Seelbach said the third section will be on data. Dr. Paul Seelbach said the potential downstream impact as stated in April report will again be addressed. The subcommittee has discussed this issue. A concurrence was reached that warm and cool would only be run through tool to local segments (as done now) with no additional attachment to down stream. The report will highlight the need to continue to look at downstream accounting. Subcommittee agreed in principle to the idea. The subcommittee is comfortable with downstream bottleneck of transitional be site specific.

Impacts on Lakes + +

Dave Hamilton

Dave Hamilton said Dr. Pat Soranno was unable to be here. The assignment of subcommittee was Great Lakes, inland lakes and other aquatic resources. Knew would not be able to cover the Great Lakes. Not as much data available as was for development of tool.

The subcommittee is still focusing on evidence needed to determine if the screening tool may or may not be able to determine if a water withdrawal would adversely impact wetlands / lakes. We are looking for a functional connection between tool metrics and wetlands/ lake metrics. If a groundwater withdrawal makes a stream withdrawal permissible, will it negatively affect the wetland? This is one issue we are trying to tackle.

The subcommittee is turning their attention to the component of the report where we will have to argue one way or the other for whether the existing evaluation process is likely to be protective for other water bodies – and in what capacity. We are summarizing the ecological literature: (1) the effects of groundwater withdrawal on lakes and wetlands, (2) the identification of candidate metrics for assessing ARI's on these water bodies.

Lake data is more problematic than wetlands. Don Uzarski plans to be at the next WRCAC meeting. Don Uzarski plans to be at the next Impacts on Lakes ++ Subcommittee meeting (on Thursday June 18 at 1:00).

Law Conflict

Polly Sync for Peter Manning

Looking at statutes. Looks like language of 32728, 32723, common law and the way the laws have been used in past there are no conflicts. Polly Sync said Peter Manning is working on preparing a report detailing his findings.

Conservation

Jim Cleland said there have been no meetings since the last council meeting. No outline was submitted. There is a rough draft that was discussed at the March WRCAC Meeting.

Preventative Measures

Dr. Bryan Burroughs

At 11:20 Dr. Bryan Burroughs spoke on behalf of the Preventative Measures Subcommittee. The subcommittee's charge is to address if there is something an applicant can do to prevent an ARI. Charge is to develop a framework on how DEQ would evaluate the work the applicant proposes to prevent an ARI. The subcommittee met on June 2 and made up an outline. Dr. Bryan Burroughs reviewed the outline.

Dick Slevatz asked how many would get a no. Dave Hamilton said currently 80% would get a yes. After site specific another 5 – 7% would get an ok.

Dr. Bryan Burroughs said the subcommittee will met again and then the report needs to get written.

Lunch

Thanks to Craig Hoffman Drummond Island Resort & Conference Center Manager a soup, salad, and sandwich lunch was provided.

Educational Materials

Jon Coleman

A handout titled: *Report to the Water Resources Conservation Advisory Council form the WRCAC Education Materials Subcommittee (May 27, 2009)* was distributed to all present. The subcommittee is trying to organize the information. Will be putting the information into a template.

As the subcommittee was looking through the materials available decided to use one template. Jon Coleman said Brandt Fisher was very helpful in organizing the list and putting into categories.

James Clift said Trout Unlimited, Sierra Club, MEC, and Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, along with Dr. David Lusch from Michigan State University's Institute for Water Research, are planning to host 6 to 8 sessions around the state geared to water conservation groups and watershed planners about the use of the tool. Six sessions will be in the Lower Peninsula and two in the UP starting around end of June. The sessions will start in the UP and work their way south. The information will be listed on the Michigan Trout Unlimited website of

<http://www.michigantu.org/index.php/component/content/article/28-council/75-wwat-workshops>. David Lusch who did original presentations will also do these presentations.

2008 Water Use Report

Mike Gregg

Today is the last day for the student worker who helped enter the data. Believe all of the data was imputed. 2004 was the first year data was collected. Total acreage reported in 2004 was 3,023. Over 4,000 acres reported in 2008. In 2007 less was reported probably because of a wetter year. Total number of farms in 2004 was 1,110. In 2008 had 1,212 farms reporting. A total of 102 more farms. In 2007 had 1306 farms reported. Regarding the source of water: of the 6,545 withdrawals 28% are surface water; 4% are ponds. There are 2,682 unique farms registered in the system. That means there are close to three irrigation facilities per farm. Total number of farms in Michigan is unknown.

Certifying Low Flow Measurement Volunteers

At 1:33 Dave Hamilton said he has been talking with USGS. Had hoped to get a process in place by now. An outline of the training course has been done. DEQ would be first to be certified. Then DNR trained. USGS has constraints on who they can train. Dave Hamilton said he just recently found out that USGS would not be able to train non-government personnel. Don't see training happening this summer. USGS can train other government entities but a problem with training private / business personnel. Training isn't enough to guarantee quality data. There would be hands on training. Only certain equipment can be used. How data is gathered must be documented. The gatherer must gather data a minimum number of times per year to keep certified. Dr. Bryan Burroughs would like to set up a meeting with Dave Hamilton regarding this process. Dave Hamilton agreed.

Report Plan for the August 7, 2009, Report

James Clift

Should an extension be requested? James Clift suggested an October 15 report date. James Clift said the Chairs would ask Senator Patricia L. Birkholz for an extension. That the August 9, 2009 due date be extended until October 15, 2009. Jon Allan said the subcommittee shouldn't be adding a lot more issues. They should keep with what has been discussed today – put in place though their outlines.

Public Comment

Dr. Paul Seelbach said two weeks ago (May 17 – 22, 2009) *A Premier International Meeting on Aquatic Ecology* hosted by the NABS (North American Benthological Society) was held in Grand Rapids. LeRoy Poff gave a presentation titled: *Developing flow-ecology response relations to support regional streamflow management*. He gave a strong positive response to Michigan's "journey". Michigan had a lot of visibility and this process is recognized worldwide. Leroy Poff is

from Colorado State University. He is recognized as the leader in this field. Dr. Paul Seelbach said he gave a talk on how our process mirror's LeRoy Poff's.

Ecological Limits of Hydrologic Alteration available at <http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/eloha> is a website set up to give policy steps. Michigan's steps mirrored what is listed there.

Dr. Paul Seelbach distributed the Q&A sheet titled: *Considering aquatic ecosystems: The basis for Michigan's new Water Withdrawal Assessment Process* available from the MSU Extension Service bulletin number WQ-60 (It is available at http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/WQ60_269923_7.pdf)

Next Meetings

James Clift

July 10, 2009, from 10:00 – 3:00 at the Tribal Community Center at 5656 Ap-Gish-Mok in Harbor Springs Michigan hosted by Frank Ettawageshik.

New August Meeting Date - August 7, 2009, is a Mandatory State Furlough Day – All State employees must take day off without pay. The WRCAC Meeting will be rescheduled for August 14, 2009.

Will meet on September 11, 2009, from 10:00 – 3:00

October 9, 2009, from 10:00 – 3:00.

There will be no November 6, 2009, meeting.

Note: There are no council meetings scheduled for November or December.

2:00 Adjourn

Craig Hoffman said the next ferry leaves the island at 3:10. It takes 15 minutes to get there from here.